AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

<u>In the Claims</u>:

Please amend claim 1 in the following manner. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A process control system capable of executing a function after initiation thereof, the process control system comprising:

a computer having a memory and a processing unit; and

a security module stored in the memory of the computer and adapted to be executed on the processing unit of the computer, wherein the security module analyzes security information collected from a user contemporaneously with ~~that~~ <u>the</u> initiation of the function and in association therewith determines whether the function should be executed.

2. (Original) The security system of claim 1, wherein the process control system comprises a network and the function is initiated via a device external to the network.

3. (Original) The security system of claim 2, wherein the device includes a client that generates a user interface to collect the security information.

4. (Original) The security system of claim 3, wherein the client passes the security information in encrypted form to the security module.

5. (Original) The security system of claim 1, further comprising a process control application stored in the memory of the computer and adapted to be executed on the

processing unit of the computer, wherein the process control application generates a security

configuration interface for establishing a security parameter for the function executed by the

process control system.

6. (Original) The security system of claim 5, wherein the security parameter

comprises data representative of a lock associated with the function executed by the process

control system.

7. (Original) The security system of claim 5, wherein the security parameter

comprises data representative of whether execution of the function requires the security

information to include a user identification and a password.

8. (Original) The security system of claim 5, wherein the security parameter

comprises data representative of whether execution of the function requires the security

information to include verification information.

9. (Original) The security system of claim 1, wherein the process control system

comprises a network and the computer resides at a node of the network.

10. (Original) The security system of claim 1, further comprising a process control

application stored in the memory of the computer and adapted to be executed on the

processing unit of the computer, wherein the process control application generates a user

interface to collect the security information from the user.

11. (Previously Presented) A method of securing a process control system capable of executing a function after initiation thereof, wherein the process control system includes a memory, the method comprising the steps of:

storing in the memory a security parameter associated with the function;

collecting security information from a user contemporaneously with the initiation of the function and in association with the function; and

determining whether to execute the function based on the collected security information and the stored security parameter.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein:

the process control system comprises a network comprising the memory; and

the security information collecting step comprises the step of communicating with a device external to the network.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the security information collecting step comprises the steps of generating a client resident in the device and providing a user interface using the client.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the security information collecting step comprises the step of passing the security information in encrypted form from the device to the network.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the security parameter comprises data representative of whether execution of the function requires the security information to include a user identification and a password.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the security parameters storing step comprises the step of generating a user interface for associating the function with a lock for which a user may be assigned a key.

17. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the security parameter comprises data representative of whether execution of the function requires the security information to include verification information.

18. (Previously Presented) A method of securing a process control system capable of execution of a function, the method comprising the steps of:

establishing a communication link between the process control system and a device external thereto to provide for remote initiation of the execution of the function;

generating a user interface via the communication link for collection of security information from a user contemporaneously with the remote initiation of the execution of the function; and

determining whether the remote initiation of the execution of the function is authorized based on the collected security information.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) A software system for a process control system capable of execution of a function, the software system comprising:

a computer-readable medium;

a first routine stored on the computer-readable medium that collects security information from a user contemporaneously with the initiation of the function and in association therewith; and

a second routine stored on the computer-readable medium that determines whether the execution of the function is authorized in accordance with the collected security information.

21. (Original) The software system of claim 20, wherein the first routine is executed in a client-server configuration such that the collected security information is transmitted from a client to a server.

22. (Original) The software system of claim 21, wherein the security information is collected via a user interface at the client.

23. (Original) The software system of claim 21, wherein the client is external to the process control system.

24. (Original) The software system of claim 21, further comprising a third routine that encrypts the collected security information prior to transmission from the client to the server.

25. (Original) The software system of claim 20, further comprising a configuration routine that establishes a security parameter for the function.

26. (Original) The software system of claim 25, wherein the security parameter comprises data representative of a lock associated with the function.

27. (Original) The software system of claim 25, wherein the security parameter comprises data representative of whether execution of the function requires the security information to include a user identification and a password.

28. (Original) The software system of claim 25, wherein the security parameter comprises data representative of whether execution of the function requires the security information to include verification information.

29. (Previously Presented) A software system for a process control system capable of execution of a function, the software system comprising:

a computer-readable medium;

a first routine stored on the computer-readable medium that establishes a communication link between the process control system and a device external thereto to provide for remote initiation of the execution of the function;

a second routine stored on the computer-readable medium that generates a user interface via the communication link for collection of security information from the user contemporaneously with the remote initiation of the execution of the function; and

a third routine stored on the computer-readable medium that determines whether the

remote initiation of the execution of the function is authorized based on the collected security

information.

30. (Canceled).

31. (Canceled).

32. (Original) The software system of claim 29, wherein the security information

transmitted via the communication link is encrypted.